



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/738,472

12/17/2003

Chang-Rong Wu

10113491

8197

34283

7590

01/25/2005

QUINTERO LAW OFFICE
1617 BROADWAY, 3RD FLOOR
SANTA MONICA, CA 90404

EXAMINER

WARREN, MATTHEW E

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2815

DATE MAILED: 01/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

H.A

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/738,472

Applicant(s)

WU ET AL.

Examiner

Matthew E. Warren

Art Unit

2815

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 November 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-47 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17-47 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to the Election filed on November 2, 2004.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election of Group II, claims 17-47 in the reply filed on November 2, 2004 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 28-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 28 states that "the conducting wire and the substrate are isolated by a circular insulating layer, and the second conducting layer surrounds the first conducting layer and the circular insulating layer." It is not understood how the conducting wire, consisting of a first and second conductor layer, is isolated from the substrate by a circular insulating layer while having the second conducting layer surround the first conducting layer and the circular insulating layer. The recitation of such a structure does not physically make sense and therefore renders the claim indefinite. For

Art Unit: 2815

purposes of the examination the limitation will be understood to mean that "the first conducting layer of the conducting wire and the substrate are isolated by a circular insulating layer" as shown in the applicant's figure 4.

Claim 33 recites the limitation "etching the first insulating layer to remove the first insulating layer on the sidewall above the second insulating layer to leave the second insulating layer on a sidewall of the second insulating layer." It is not understood how the second insulating layer is left on the sidewall of the second insulating layer. The examiner assumes that the applicants intended "to leave the first insulating layer on a sidewall of the second insulating layer" and will interpret the limitation to be recited as such until further clarification is given.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 17-19, 25, 26, and 28-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hsiao et al. (US 6,391,705 B1) in view of Gruening et al. (US 6,184,091 B1).

In re claim 17, Hsiao et al. discloses (figs. 2-10A) a method for fabricating a memory device with a vertical transistor and a trench capacitor, comprising: providing a substrate (200); forming at least one deep trench (302) in the substrate; forming a

Art Unit: 2815

trench capacitor (504) in the bottom of the deep trench; forming a conducting wire (604 and 702) on the trench capacitor; forming a trench top insulating layer (802) on the conducting wire, and forming a control gate (1104) on the trench top insulating layer.

Hsiao shows all of the elements of the claims except the trench top insulating layer consisting of a first insulating layer and a second insulating layer surrounded by the first insulating layer. Gruening et al. discloses a method of forming a memory device comprising the step of forming a top insulating layer (40 in fig. 3) having a first insulating layer (36) and a second insulating layer (44) surrounded by the first insulating layer. With such a configuration, an improved trench top insulation layer is formed (col. 5, lines 13-19). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the trench top oxide of Hsiao by using a first and second insulating layer as taught by Gruening to form an improved, reliable trench top insulation.

In re claims 18 and 19, Hsiao shows (fig. 12A) the method further comprising a buried strap (704) in the substrate beside the conducting wire to electrically connect the control gate as a drain and a doped area in the substrate beside the control gate as a source (1210).

In re claims 25 and 26, Gruening discloses (col. 4, line 59 – col. 5, line 19) that the first insulating layer is nitride and the second insulating layer is TEOS oxide. Gruening also discloses (col. 5, lines 38-41) that the thickness of the second insulating layer is within the range recited in claim 26.

In re claims 28-31, as far as understood, Hsiao shows (fig. 7) that the conducting wire has a first conducting layer (604) and a second conducting layer (702), the first conducting layer of the conducting wire and the substrate are isolated by a circular insulating layer (602), and the second conducting layer is formed on the first conducting layer and the circular insulating layer. The first conducting layer is a doped poly layer or a doped epi-silicon layer, the second conducting layer is a poly layer or an epi-silicon layer, and the circular insulating layer is a silicon oxide layer (col. 3, line 41 col. 4, line13).

In re claim 32, Hsiao shows (fig. 10A) that the control gate consists of a gate conducting layer (1104) and a gate oxide layer (1002), and the gate conducting layer consists of a poly layer, a WSi layer, a metal layer, or a composite thereof (col. 5, lines 20-28).

Claims 20-24 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hsiao et al. (US 6,391,705 B1) in view of Gruening et al. (US 6,184,091 B1) as applied to claim 17 above, and further in view of Nitayama et al. (US 6,720,606 B1).

In re claims 20-24, Hsiao in view of Gruening show all of the elements of the claims except the first insulating layer being and oxide nitride layer. Nitayama et al. discloses (col. 11, lines 25-38) discloses a method of forming an insulator (130) for a trench capacitor. The insulating liner portion comprises about 5nm (50 Angstroms) of oxide and about 5nm (50 Angstroms) of nitride. The oxide is formed by thermal oxidation and the nitride is formed by CVD. Although the references don't disclose the

desired range of the oxide layer thickness of the oxide-nitride, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to make the thickness of the oxide within the desired range, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the single nitride first insulating layer of Hsiao and Gruening by substituting it with an oxide-nitride layer as taught by Nitayama to provide a more reliable insulating liner for the trench top insulation.

In re claim 27, Nitayama further discloses (col. 11, lines 25-38) that a subsequent TEOS layer is formed by LPCVD.

Claims 33-35, 41, 42, and 44-47, as far as understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hsiao et al. (US 6,391,705 B1) in view of Jammy et al. (US 6,222,218 B1) and Gruening et al. (US 6,184,091 B1).

In re claim 33, as far as understood, Hsiao et al. discloses (col. 3, line 42 – col. 5, line 40) and figs. 2-10A) a method for fabricating a memory device with a vertical transistor and a trench capacitor, comprising: providing a substrate (200); forming at least one deep trench (302) in the substrate; forming a trench capacitor (504) in the bottom of the deep trench; forming an insulating layer (602) on the trench capacitor, a sidewall of the deep trench, and the substrate; etching the insulating layer until the insulating layer on the trench capacitor and the substrate is removed to form a circular

insulating layer (602) on the sidewall of the deep trench (col. 3, lines 40-55); filling a first conducting layer (604) in the deep trench; etching the first conducting layer to expose the circular insulating layer (col. 3, lines 55-65); forming a second conducting layer (702) on the first conducting layer, the circular insulating layer, the sidewall of the deep trench, and the substrate; partially etching the second conducting layer to remove the second conducting layer on the sidewall of the deep trench and the substrate (col. 4, lines 1-13), in which a conducting wire consists of the first conducting layer and the second conducting layer; conformably forming a first insulating layer (706) on the second conducting layer, the sidewall of the deep trench, and the substrate; partially etching the first insulating layer to remove the first insulating layer on the second conducting layer and the substrate to form a spacer on the sidewall of the deep trench (col. 4, lines 29-42); filling a second insulating layer (802) in the deep trench; etching the first insulating layer to remove the first insulating layer on the sidewall above the second insulating layer; and forming a control gate (1004) on the trench top insulating layer.

Hsiao shows all of the elements of the claims except the method of etching the circular insulating layer to below the first conducting layer. Jammy et al. discloses a process (see figs. 3f-3i) of forming a trench capacitor comprising etching the circular insulating layer (30) to below the first conducting layer (32) in the deep trench (col. 8, line 62 – col. 9, line 26). A second conducting layer (34) is formed on the first conducting layer and the circular insulating layer and is then etched to leave the second conducting layer coning the first conducting layer and the circular insulating layer (fig. 3i and col. 9, lines 18-26). With this configuration, the buried strap outdiffusion is limited, thus improving

Art Unit: 2815

the electrical characteristics of the device. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the conducting wire of Hsiao by forming the second conducting layer coning the first conducting layer and circular insulating layer as taught by Jammy to limit the outdiffusion of a subsequent buried strap, thus improving the electrical characteristic of the device.

Neither reference discloses the process of forming the trench top insulating layer which includes etching the second insulating layer to expose the first insulating layer and etching the first insulating layer to remove the first insulating layer on the sidewall above the second insulating to leave the first insulating layer on a sidewall of the second insulating layer, in which a trench top insulating layer consists of the first insulating layer and the second insulating layer. Gruening et al. discloses (figs. 2-5) a method of forming an improved trench top insulating layer comprising etching a second insulating layer (44) to expose the first insulating layer (36) (col. 5, lines 13-19) and etching the first insulating layer to remove the first insulating layer on the sidewall above the second insulating to leave the first insulating layer on a sidewall of the second insulating layer (col. 5, lines 52-67), in which a trench top insulating layer consists of the first insulating layer and the second insulating layer. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the trench top oxide of Hsiao by forming and etching a first and second insulating layer as taught by Gruening to form an improved, reliable trench top insulation.

In re claims 34 and 35, Hsiao shows (fig. 12A) the method further comprising a buried strap (704) in the substrate beside the conducting wire to electrically connect the control gate as a drain and a doped area in the substrate beside the control gate as a source (1210).

In re claims 41 and 42, Gruening discloses (col. 4, line 59 – col. 5, line 19) that the first insulating layer is nitride and the second insulating layer is TEOS oxide. Gruening also discloses (col. 5, lines 38-41) that the thickness of the second insulating layer is within the range recited in claim 42.

In re claims 44-46, Hsiao discloses that the first conducting layer is a doped poly layer or a doped epi-silicon layer, the second conducting layer is a poly layer or an epi-silicon layer, and the circular insulating layer is a silicon oxide layer (col. 3, line 41 col. 4, line13).

In re claim 47, Hsiao shows (fig. 10A) that the control gate consists of a gate conducting layer (1104) and a gate oxide layer (1002), and the gate conducting layer consists of a poly layer, a WSi layer, a metal layer, or a composite thereof (col. 5, lines 20-28).

Claims 36-40 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hsiao et al. (US 6,391,705 B1) in view of Jammy et al. (US 6,222,218 B1) and Gruening et al. (US 6,184,091 B1) as applied to claim 33 above, and further in view of Nitayama et al. (US 6,720,606 B1).

In re claims 36-40, Hsiao in view of Jammy and Gruening show all of the elements of the claims except the first insulating layer being an oxide nitride layer. Nitayama et al. discloses (col. 11, lines 25-38) discloses a method of forming an insulator (130) for a trench capacitor. The insulating liner portion comprises about 5nm (50 Angstroms) of oxide and about 5nm (50 Angstroms) of nitride. The oxide is formed by thermal oxidation and the nitride is formed by CVD. Although the references don't disclose the desired range of the oxide layer thickness of the oxide-nitride, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to make the thickness of the oxide within the desired range, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the single nitride first insulating layer of Hsiao, Jammy, and Gruening by substituting it with an oxide-nitride layer as taught by Nitayama to provide a more reliable insulating liner for the trench top insulation.

In re claim 43, Nitayama further discloses (col. 11, lines 25-38) that a subsequent TEOS layer is formed by LPCVD.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Divakaruni et al. (US Pub. 2004/0129942 A1), Mandelman et al.

Art Unit: 2815

(US 6,555,862 B1), and Chidambarao et al. (US 6,703,274 B1) also shows a trench top insulating layer for a deep trench capacitor having a first and second insulating layer.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew E. Warren whose telephone number is (571) 272-1737. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thur and alternating Fri 9:00-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Thomas can be reached on (571) 272-1664. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MEW
MEW
January 19, 2005


GEORGE ECKERT
PRIMARY EXAMINER